



Interesting Presidential Facts

Presidents' Day

- * Only five presidents have ever worn facial hair when they sought the office. The last was over a century ago, in 1889; Benjamin Harrison.
- * There have been seven left-handed presidents, including three of the last four (Bill Clinton, George H.W. Bush, and Ronald Reagan).
- * The first president to smoke a cigar in office was James Madison. In fact, Madison regularly smoked cigars until his death in 1836 at the age of 85. Madison was also the shortest president at five-feet four-inches tall.
- * George W. Bush, 43rd president of the United States, and his wife Laura got married just three months after meeting each other.
- * 40th president of the United States Ronald Reagan broke the so-called "20-year curse," in which every president elected in a year ending in 0 died in office.
- * Military leader and 34th president of the U.S. Dwight D. Eisenhower loved to cook; he developed a recipe for vegetable soup that is 894 words long and includes the stems of nasturtium flowers as one of the ingredients.
- * The letter "S" comprises the full middle name of the 33rd president, Harry S. Truman. It represents two of his grandfathers, whose names both had "S" in them.
- * 32nd president of the United States Franklin D. Roosevelt was related, either by blood or by marriage, to 11 former presidents.
- * Herbert Hoover, 31st U.S. president, published more than 16 books, including one called *Fishing for Fun-And to Wash Your Soul*.
- * Calvin Coolidge, 30th president of the United States, had chronic stomach pain and required 10 to 11 hours of sleep and an afternoon nap every day.
- * Warren Harding, 29th U.S. president, played poker at least twice a week, and once gambled away an entire set of White House china. His advisors were nicknamed the "Poker Cabinet" because they joined the president in his poker games.
- * William Taft, 27th president of the United States, weighed more than 300 pounds and had a special oversized bathtub installed in the White House.
- * The teddy bear derived from 26th U.S. president Theodore ("Teddy") Roosevelt's refusal to shoot a bear with her cub while on a hunting trip in Mississippi.
- * Grover Cleveland, 22nd and 24th president of the United States, underwent a secret operation aboard a yacht to remove his cancerous upper jaw in 1893.

* Both ambidextrous and multilingual, 20th president of the United States James Garfield could write Greek with one hand while writing Latin with the other.

* Ulysses S. Grant, 18th president of the United States, died of throat cancer. During his life, Grant had smoked about 20 cigars per day.

* 17th U.S. president Andrew Johnson never attended school. His future wife, Eliza McCardle, taught him to write at the age of 17. (Bonus fact about Andrew Johnson: He only wore suits that he custom-tailored himself.)

* Often depicted wearing a tall black stovepipe hat, 16th president of the United States Abraham Lincoln carried letters, bills, and notes in his hat.

* 15th U.S. president James Buchanan is the only unmarried man ever to be elected president. Buchanan was engaged to be married once; however, his fiancée died suddenly after breaking off the engagement, and he remained a bachelor all his life.

* Sedated only by brandy, 11th president of the United States James Polk survived gall bladder surgery at the age of 17.

* John Tyler, 10th U.S. president, fathered 15 children (more than any other president)--8 by his first wife, and 7 by his second wife. Tyler was past his seventieth birthday when his 15th child was born.

* 9th U.S. president William Henry Harrison was inaugurated on a bitterly cold day and gave the longest inauguration speech ever. The new president promptly caught a cold that soon developed into pneumonia. Harrison died exactly one month into his presidential term, the shortest in U.S. history.

* In warm weather, 6th president of the United States John Quincy Adams customarily went skinny-dipping in the Potomac River before dawn.